



Reshaping US Navy Pacific response in mitigating disaster risk in South Pacific Island nations: Adopting community-based disaster cycle management

Author(s): Reaves EJ, Termini M, Burkle FM
Year: 2014
Journal: Prehospital and Disaster Medicine. 29 (1): 60-68

Abstract:

The US Department of Defense continues to deploy military assets for disaster relief and humanitarian actions around the world. These missions, carried out through geographically located Combatant Commands, represent an evolving role the US military is taking in health diplomacy, designed to enhance disaster preparedness and response capability. Oceania is a unique case, with most island nations experiencing "acute-on-chronic" environmental stresses defined by acute disaster events on top of the consequences of climate change. In all Pacific Island nation-states and territories, the symptoms of this process are seen in both short- and long-term health concerns and a deteriorating public health infrastructure. These factors tend to build on each other. To date, the US military's response to Oceania primarily has been to provide short-term humanitarian projects as part of Pacific Command humanitarian civic assistance missions, such as the annual Pacific Partnership, without necessarily improving local capacity or leaving behind relevant risk-reduction strategies. This report describes the assessment and implications on public health of large-scale humanitarian missions conducted by the US Navy in Oceania. Future opportunities will require the Department of Defense and its Combatant Commands to show meaningful strategies to implement ongoing, long-term, humanitarian activities that will build sustainable, host nation health system capacity and partnerships. This report recommends a community-centric approach that would better assist island nations in reducing disaster risk throughout the traditional disaster management cycle and defines a potential and crucial role of Department of Defense's assets and resources to be a more meaningful partner in disaster risk reduction and community capacity building.

Source: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/s1049023x13009138>

Resource Description

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Extreme Weather Event

Extreme Weather Event: Drought, Flooding, Hurricanes/Cyclones, Landslides

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Ocean/Coastal

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Australasia

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Health Outcome Unspecified

Intervention:

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

Resilience:

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content